

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 23, 1860—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. HALE made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany bill S. 309.]

*The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Charles J. Swett, have had the same under consideration, and report:*

This case was before the Committee on Naval Affairs in the Thirty-fourth Congress and favorably reported upon, which report your committee beg leave to adopt, and is as follows:

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.—FEBRUARY 17, 1855.

*The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the memorial of Charles J. Swett, praying compensation as purser during the time he served as such on board the San Jacinto, have had the same under consideration, and report:*

That the petitioner has been attached to the naval service of the United States, under appointments sanctioned by various officers in command, as purser's clerk, since 1842. That, on the 28th November, 1851, he was duly appointed, with the sanction of Captain Thomas Crabbe, to that station on board of the steamer San Jacinto, of which William A. Christian was the purser. That he entered upon his duties at New York on the 1st of December following, and continued faithfully to discharge them during the voyage of that steamer up the Mediterranean and while in that sea, until the 6th of October, 1852, when his said commanding officer, Captain Crabbe, appointed him an acting purser. This appointment was occasioned by the following circumstances: Purser Christian, in consequence of serious ill-health, was, on the 4th of August, 1852, by the orders of Commodore Silas C. Stringham, detached from the San Jacinto to return to the United States.

He left the frigate on the 7th of August, 1852, leaving in charge of the petitioner the public property and the official accounts of his department. The petitioner entered and performed the trust and responsibilities incident to this new position, and, agreeably to instructions, discharged all the duties of purser in the name of Mr. Christian, waiting the arrival on board of the San Jacinto of such officer as might be appointed by the Navy Department to relieve that gentleman. On the

6th of October following, Captain Crabbe, while at Trieste, having been duly informed of the death of Purser Christian, deemed it necessary and expedient to give to the petitioner the acting appointment he has mentioned; and he, of course, thereupon and in consequence thereof resigned his clerkship. In obedience to orders, dated October 11, 1852, an inventory of stores and moneys having been taken by a board of officers, the petitioner closed the accounts of the deceased Purser Christian and took into his own custody the public property. The petitioner thenceforward, to the 30th of November following, fulfilled all the duties of purser. On this last date, Mr. John B. Rittenhouse having been, by order of the Secretary of the Navy, attached to the frigate San Jacinto, as purser, and having reached the ship on that day, the acting appointment of the petitioner was revoked; and, in compliance with orders, he transferred the whole charge to Mr. Rittenhouse.

Your committee, from information received from the Navy Department, find that the petitioner received pay as purser's *clerk* from the 7th of August, 1852, to the 6th of October, 1852; and that, although he held the appointment and discharged the duties of acting purser from the 6th October, 1852, to the 30th November, 1852, he received no pay therefor, "on the ground that he could not be appointed a purser except by the President and Senate."

Your committee, for the reasons above stated, deem the claim an equitable one so far as pay as acting purser, from the 6th of October to the 30th of November, 1852, is concerned, and report a bill accordingly.